

AO 91 (Rev. 11/11) Criminal Complaint

United States District Court
Southern District of Texas
FILED

UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT

FEB 17 2022

for the

Southern District of Texas

Nathan Ochsner, Clerk

United States of America
v.
Sonya Katherine Cornelius (1972/USA)

Case No.

M-22-0352-M

Defendant(s)

CRIMINAL COMPLAINT

I, the complainant in this case, state that the following is true to the best of my knowledge and belief.

On or about the date(s) of February 17, 2022 in the county of Hidalgo in the
Southern District of Texas, the defendant(s) violated:

Code Section

21 USC § 952

Offense Description

Illegal Importation of a Controlled Substance / Approximately 230 milliliters of
Fentanyl and 30 milliliters of morphine, Schedule II Controlled Substances.

This criminal complaint is based on these facts:

See Attachment "A"

☒ Continued on the attached sheet.

Complaint authorized by: AUSA Colton Turner

Submitted by reliable electronic means, sworn to
and attested to telephonically per Fed. R. Cr. 4.1,
and probable cause found on:Date: 02/17/2022 9:25 PMCity and state: McAllen, Texas

/s/ Nicholas C. Stott

Complainant's signature

Nicholas C. Stott, HSI Special Agent

Printed name and title



Judge's signature

U.S. Magistrate Judge Nadia S. Medrano

Printed name and title

Attachment "A"

I, Nicholas C. Stott, am a Special Agent of the United States Homeland Security Investigations (HSI) and have knowledge of the following facts. The facts related in this attachment do not reflect the totality of information known to me or other agents/officers, merely the amount needed to establish probable cause. I do not rely upon facts not set forth herein in reaching my conclusion that a complaint should be issued, nor do I request that this Court rely upon any facts not set forth herein in reviewing this attachment in support of the complaint.

1. On February 17, 2022, Homeland Security Investigations in McAllen, Texas, (HSI McAllen) received a request for investigative assistance from the U.S. Customs and Border Protection Office of Field Operations at the Progreso Port of Entry (POE) in Progreso, Texas. CBP Officers (CBPOs) detained Sonya Katherine Cornelius (hereafter CORNELIUS), a United States Citizen, traveling with her three-year-old son, while attempting to enter the U.S. with approximately 230 milliliters of fentanyl and 30 milliliters of morphine concealed within her cosmetic bag.
2. During primary inbound inspection, CBPOs obtained a negative oral declaration for fruits, food, alcohol, tobacco, drugs, weapons and currency over \$10,000.00 from CORNELIUS. CBPOs referred CORNELIUS and the vehicle to secondary inspection for further inspection.
3. A physical search of the CORNELIUS' property was conducted, and 23 vials containing approximately 230 milliliters of fentanyl and three vials containing approximately 30 milliliters of morphine were located in CORNELIUS' cosmetic bag.
4. HSI Special Agents responded to the Progreso POE to assist in the investigation. HSI Special Agents interviewed CORNELIUS, who stated she purchased the fentanyl and morphine in Nuevo Progreso, Mexico and knew it was illegal to import the controlled substances into the United States. CORNELIUS admitted to numerous other previous trips from Mexico into the United States where she illegally brought controlled substances back into the United States.